THE NEW
INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • WEDNESDAY • DECEMBER 09, 2020 • ₹7.00 • PAGES 22 • LATE CITY EDITION

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1,2,3,4 GET ON THE DANCE FLOOR IN OLYMPICS 2024...

International Olympic Council includes breakdancing as Olympic sport. It will become part of the Games in Paris

URBANISED EVENTS & GENDER-EQUALITY

According to IOC chief Thomas Bach, IOC wanted to introduce sports popular among the younger generation and taking into consideration the urbanisation of sport. Breakdancing will be called breaking at the Olympics, as it was in the 1970s by hip-hop pioneers in the US. Gender equality would be attained for the first time in Olympic history in Paris.

THREE OTHER SPORTS INCLUDED TOO

- Skateboarding, sport climbing and surfing will also feature in Paris, which will see the number of athletes capped at 10,500.
- 329 medal events in Paris is 10 fewer than in Tokyo next year, including four lost from weightlifting. There will be a mixed gender event in place of men's 50M walk.

4

WEIGHTLIFTING CATEGORIES WILL BE REMOVED AT PARIS GAMES

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

KEJRI UNDER HOUSE ARREST?

New Delhi: The ruling AAP on Tuesday charged that the police had put Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal under house arrest after he met farmers at the Singhu border, but the police rubbished the allegation. "If I wasn't stopped, I would have gone and supported farmers in their Bharat Bandh call," Kejriwal later said

Security personnel stand guard as farmers protesting Centre's farm laws block the Delhi-Meerut Expressway on Tuesday | PTI

NITI PEEVE ON TOO MUCH DEMOCRACY

New Delhi: In India we have a too much of democracy, NITI Aayog CEO Amitabh Kant said on Tuesday, while responding to criticism of India turning a protectionist country. He said that the government has shown tremendous courage and determination to carry out reforms in various sectors | P9

Shah intervention fails to end deadlock

Bharat Bandh total in states like Punjab; govt to give in writing proposals to amend the new farm laws today

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

A direct unscheduled intervention by Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Tuesday failed to break the ongoing impasse, with the agitating farmers saying they will not end their protest until the government rescinds the recently enacted farm sector reform laws.

The nearly three-hour-long talks Shah had with a select group of farmer leaders remained inconclusive. The agitators later said the sixth rounds of talks, scheduled for Wednesday, will not take place.

In all, 13 farmer leaders were called for the meeting, which began after 8.30 pm at the International guest house of Indian Council for Agriculture Research in the Pusa area, in the presence of Union Agriculture Minister Narendra Singh Tomar and agriculture secretary Sanjay Agarwal. Eight of the 13 were from Punjab.

Sources said Shah was firm on ruling out a rollback of the farm laws, but was willing to introduce more amendments to address various concerns. However, there were conflicting versions on whether making the Minimum Support Price mechanism legally binding will be part of the basket of proposals the government will give in writing on Wednesday.

Sources said when Shah asserted that the repeal of the laws was out of the question, the farmers retorted that their agitation, too, could not be withdrawn. Shah then came up with the offer of fresh amendments, which he agreed to provide in writing on Wednesday. Since all 32 farmer unions will meet to take their call on Wednesday, the possibility of a fresh round of talks with the Centre on Thursday exists.

A Union Cabinet meeting is scheduled for Wednesday.

Hanan Mollah, general secretary of All India Kisan Sabha, who was among the participants, said: "No meeting will be held between farmers and the government on Wednesday."

A Bharat Bandh observed by farmers to press their demands evoked mixed response and affected life in some states on Tuesday. Even before the meeting with Shah started, some farmer organisations expressed unhappiness over the truncated list of negotiators.

Besides, Punjab Kisan Union head Ruldu Singh Mansa decided to skip the meeting over a last-minute change in the venue. Earlier, it was proposed to be held at Shah's residence. Speaking to reporters, Mansa said he won't attend the meeting, but it later turned out that he did participate. P9

Mixed response to bandh in K'taka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Bharat Bandh on Tuesday mostly saw mixed response in Karnataka. While the state capital saw thousands of farmers taking out a rally from Town Hall, rallies and protests were held in other districts.

Several farmers' organisations came out in support of the bandh called by the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene as part of the all-India bandh to protest against the reforms to farm laws by the Centre. Pro-Kannada organisations too backed the shutdown. P5

30 CRORE ON INDIA'S PRIORITY JAB LIST

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE contours of India's Covid vaccination strategy were disclosed for the first time, as the Centre on Tuesday said nearly 30 crore people, including healthcare and frontline workers; those above 50; and people under 50 with comorbidities will be on the priority list.

A National Expert Group on Covid-19 Vaccine Administration recommended that every single Indian who needs to be vaccinated will get the shot, said Union Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan while describing the core groups that needs to be immunised on the priority **(see box)**.

The groups are not sequential and the vaccination in these categories can be simultaneous, depending on the availability of doses, Bhushan said, adding the Centre is yet to take its call on the recommendations of the expert panel.

The collated data of beneficiaries across all states and central ministries is being uploaded on a software called Co-WIN, which has been specially designed to track and monitor Covid-19 vaccination process.

For proper storage of the vaccine, at present 85,634 units at 28,947 cold chain points exist across the country.

90-YEAR-OLD FIRST TO GET ANTI-COVID SHOT

British grandmother Margaret "Maggie" Keenan (90) on Tuesday became the first person in the world to receive the Pfizer/BioNTech jab against Covid, with the UK launching its massive vaccination programme | P11

THE BENEFICIARIES

- 1 cr — Healthcare workers of all categories in both govt & private sector
- 2 cr — Frontline workers, including police, armed forces, home guard etc
- 27 cr — People above 50 years as well as those under 50 with comorbidities

Karnataka waging war against drugs: Bommai

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

THE Karnataka Government is waging a war against the drug menace in the state, said Home Minister Basavaraj Bommai on Tuesday.

Giving out statistics in the Assembly to underline his government's commitment to fighting the drug menace, Bommai said till November-end this year, the state government has registered 3,852 cases under various sections of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act. Out of these, charge sheets have been filed in 2,285 cases.

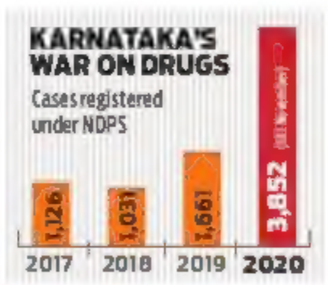
Replying to Eshwar Khandre (Congress), he said the figure marks a rise in comparison to 1,126 such cases filed in 2017, 1,031 in 2018 and 1,661 in 2019.

Karnataka aims to set up basic labs in all districts while starting five more regional FSLs in Mysuru, Mangaluru, Hubbaili, Kalaburagi and Belagavi in a year's time for speedy disposal of drug-related cases, the Home Minister said.

"Earlier, there was a delay in testing at the lab. We have now modernised the FSL in Bengaluru which is capable of testing 51 samples at a time. A separate Narcotics section has been opened in FSL," Bommai said.

The state has cracked 21 dark web cases in Bengaluru alone, which is the highest ever, and the war against drugs has begun, he said.

Bommai said more challenging are synthetic drugs which come in 1 mm by 1 mm strips and cost ₹2,500. This year alone we have seized 5,049 such strips, which was just 155, last year, he added. P4



Chief Minister B S Yeddiyurappa during the Council session in Bengaluru on Tuesday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

Land reforms Bill passes Council test with JDS backing

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

AMID stiff opposition by members of the Congress, the controversial Karnataka Land Reforms (Second Amendment) Bill, 2020, was passed in the Legislative Council on Tuesday with the support of JD(S) members.

A lengthy debate over the Bill was held on Monday and Tuesday before it was put to vote. Revenue Minister R Ashoka tabled the Bill in the evening and the Congress members insisted that they don't want a voice vote and demanded for division of votes. When the Bill was put for vote, 37 MLCs, including JD(S) MLCs barring Marithibbegowda, voted in favour while 21 voted against it.

The Bill was passed in the Legislative Assembly in September and was pending before the Council. With the Upper House too passing the Bill now, the decks are cleared for non-agriculturalists to buy agricultural land in the state.

The government had earlier issued an ordinance to repeal Sections 79A (Prohibition on Acquisition of land by certain persons) and 79B (Prohibition of holding agricultural land by certain persons).

CONTINUED ON: P4

EXPRESS READ

Gold smuggling: Swapna says she was threatened

Kochi: Swapna Suresh, prime accused in the gold smuggling case, has alleged that while she was in judicial remand, she was warned against disclosing names to probe agencies | P7

Mount Everest 86 cm taller than thought

Kathmandu: After years of debate, China and Nepal on Tuesday agreed on 8,848.86 metres as the height of Mount Everest—86 centimeters taller than the 1954 estimate by India | P18

GREENS CHEER

Apex court upholds stay on highway project

MEERA BHARDWAJ @ Bengaluru

IN a big win for environmentalists, the Supreme Court has upheld the Karnataka High Court's stay on widening of the National Highway-4A between Karnataka and Goa passing through the fragile Western Ghats. It also dismissed a Special Leave Petition filed by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI). The agency had challenged the high court's stay order restraining it from carrying on with the project.

The project led to a massive felling of trees by NHAI in Khanapur taluk | EXPRESS

A bench comprising Justices L Nageshwar Rao, Hemant Gupta and Ajay Rastogi, however, granted liberty to the NHAI to approach the Karnataka High Court for any relief.

In November, 2019, the high court, in its interim order, had stayed the widening work on NH-4A as it did not have any valid environmental clearance or other approvals. P7

Heblikar, trust had filed plea

The petition was filed in the HC in January 2019 by film director Suresh Heblikar and United Conservation Movement trustee Joseph Hoover.

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